

Message Text

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PAGE 01 HONG K 02946 151039Z

15

ACTION EA-14

INFO OCT-01 EUR-25 NEA-10 ISO-00 NSCE-00 SAJ-01 NIC-01

CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-07 H-03 INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-07

PA-04 RSC-01 PRS-01 SPC-03 SS-20 USIA-15 CU-04 IO-14

OMB-01 ACDA-19 DRC-01 /165 W
----- 106587

R 150845Z MAR 74

FM AMCONSUL HONG KONG

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 9974

INFO AMEMBASSY DACCA

AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD

AMEMBASSY KATHMANDU

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI

AMEMBASSY RANGOON

AMEMBASSY TAIPEI

AMEMBASSY TOKYO

USLO PEKING

CINCPAC HONOLULU HI

C O N F I D E N T I A L HONG KONG 2946

CINCPAC FOR POLAD

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, CH, IN

SUBJECT: CHINA-INDIA

SUMMARY: SINCE THE BREZHNEV VISIT TO INDIA, CHINA HAS
DOWNPLAYED INDIA'S MILITARY THREAT TO SOUTH ASIA. THIS
PROPAGANDA TREND PROBABLY REFLECTS A MORE FAVORABLE VIEW
OF INDIA'S SOVIET POLICY AS WELL AS POLITICAL DEVELOPMENTS
ON THE SUB-CONTINENT. IT MAY ALSO PROVIDE A SUITABLE PSYCHO-
LOGICAL FRAMEWORK FOR CHINA'S FUTURE ACCOMMODATION WITH
BANGLADESH AND IMPROVEMENT OF RELATIONS WITH THE GOI.
END SUMMARY.

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PAGE 02 HONG K 02946 151039Z

1. SINCE THE BREZHNEV VISIT TO INDIA LAST NOVEMBER, CHINESE MEDIA HAVE DROPPED THE PREVIOUS THEME WHICH ACCUSED INDIA OF "MILITARY EXPANSION AND PREPARATIONS FOR WAR" IN COLLUSION WITH THE USSR. AT THE SAME TIME PEKING HAS SHARPENED ITS PORTRAYAL OF INDIA'S ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL CRISIS, ALTHOUGH STILL MUTING CRITICISM OF THE CENTRAL GOVERNMENT.

2. MOST RECENT EXAMPLES OF THIS PROPAGANDA PATTERN ARE TWO SEPARATE NCNA COMMENTARIES OF MARCH 12 REVIEWING THE ECONOMIC CRISIS IN INDIA AND THE GOI'S NEW MILITARY BUDGET. NCNA REPORTED THAT INDUSTRIAL PRODUCTION IN INDIA WAS AT A STANDSTILL, THE MASSES STARVING DUE TO THE SERIOUS FOOD SHORTAGE, AND PRICES SOARING. WHILE THE ARTICLE INCLUDED CORRUPTION AS ONE OF THE PROBLEMS CONTRIBUTING TO THE ECONOMIC CRISIS, IT AVOIDED DIRECT ATTACKS ON THE NEW DELHI GOVERNMENT. THE SECOND ARTICLE NOTED THAT WHILE INDIA'S ECONOMY IS RIDDLED WITH DIFFICULTIES, THE INDIAN GOVERNMENT IN ITS BUDGET FOR FISCAL '74-75 INCREASED MILITARY SPENDING TO RECORD HEIGHTS. NCNA NOTED THAT INDIAN STATEMENTS JUSTIFYING THESE LARGE MILITARY EXPENDITURES WERE IN CONTRAST TO THE GOI'S RECENT UTTERANCES ABOUT "PEACE, STABILITY AND SECURITY" IN SOUTH ASIA. NEVERTHELESS, THE ARTICLE DID NOT DIRECTLY LINK THE INCREASED DEFENSE BUDGET TO ANY THREAT TO INDIA'S NEIGHBORS. THE ARTICLE ALSO FAILED TO DISCUSS THE PREVIOUSLY ALLEGED SOVIET INFILTRATION OF INDIA'S MILITARY ESTABLISHMENT.

3. COMMENT: DOWNPLAYING INDIA'S MILITARY THREAT IN SOUTH ASIA AS WELL AS ITS ALLIANCE WITH THE SOVIET UNION PRESUMABLY REFLECTS A FAVORABLE CHINESE REACTION TO NEW DELHI'S REFUSAL TO ENDORSE BREZHNEV'S COLLECTIVE SECURITY IDEA. IT IS ALSO PROBABLY RELATED TO THE IMPROVEMENT OF PAKISTAN'S RELATIONS WITH INDIA AND ITS RECOGNITION OF BANGLADESH. PEKING'S EMERGING PROPAGANDA PICTURE OF INDIA AS A BEDEVILED AND NON-THREATENING ENTITY MAY ALSO PROVIDE A SUITABLE PSYCHOLOGICAL FRAMEWORK FOR CHINA'S FUTURE ACCOMMODATION WITH BANGLADESH AND SOME IMPROVEMENT OF ITS OWN RELATIONS WITH THE GOI.

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PAGE 03 HONG K 02946 151039Z

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